

Mr. President, I urge you to have compassion for the Americans who can't afford this price of oil.

#### THE ENERGY SITUATION REQUIRES A THREE-LEGGED STOOL

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to hear the Democrats flail around for reasons that they won't put energy issues on the floor. I agree with the preceding speaker. Let's talk about the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Let's talk about offshore drilling. We haven't moved a single appropriation bill because of the fear that we may have an amendment on offshore drilling.

Now the President has lifted his ban, and what we hear from the Democrats is it will take 10 years, it will take 20 years. It means two things: number one, they agree there's oil out there; number two, there's a discussion about how long it will take.

But my question to them is where are your electric cars? Where are your hybrids that suddenly are going to save us? Those are also going to be 10 years down the road.

We need to put it all on the table. We need to look at conservation, we need to look at alternative energy, and we need to drill. It is that simple. You have got to have a three-legged stool to answer the energy situation. And I don't know why the Speaker of the House is afraid to put it on the floor. That is right. There will not be a debate on it because the Democrats are afraid to put it on the floor.

I say let's have an up-or-down vote on all of these issues.

#### A GOVERNMENT OF, BY, AND FOR THE OIL COMPANIES

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, you know, when you listen to the Bush White House and our Republican friends, you really do get the impression that this is a government of, by, and for the oil companies. And in fact, maybe it is. I mean, after all, President Bush was the founder of Bush Oil Exploration. He was a paid board member of several oil exploration companies. Vice President CHENEY is the former CEO of Halliburton, the world's largest oil services company. He's made millions off Halliburton stock while he's been in office.

Newsweek, in fact, at the beginning of the Bush administration, identified 11 key decision makers in the energy policy area that had worked for or lobbied for the energy industry. And in fact when Vice President CHENEY put together his energy transition team, 50 members were from the big corporate energy companies. None was from renewable energy organizations. Maybe that's why the Bush administration

has cut renewable energy programs by 27 percent, including a 54 percent cut in solar energy.

There are many reasons why we're in this situation, Mr. Speaker, and one big reason is the background and the priorities of the President and Vice President.

#### HOUSING MARKET MELTDOWN

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I represent the city of Stockton, California, which suffers from the highest foreclosure rates in the country. I have seen exactly how devastating this problem is for communities, and more important, for the families in our district. I hear all too often the heartbreaking stories of people struggling to keep up. In fact, Mr. CARDOZA, who spoke a minute ago, and I have had foreclosure workshops to provide counseling to help families refinance and stay out of foreclosure.

Our current economic crisis, including the housing market meltdown, can financially devastate many people, and we need change right now so that hardworking American families can stay in their homes. We need to reform the system by raising the conforming loan limits and providing critical relief to hardworking families.

I strongly believe that we can help provide the breathing room that families need so they not only weather the downturn, but come back stronger than ever.

#### BIG OIL DOESN'T NEED MORE LAND TO DRILL

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, while gas prices continue to soar, Democrats are looking for real solutions to give Americans relief at the pump. We aren't repeating the same rhetoric day after day about opening up our pristine lands and waters to drilling only to save pennies per gallon in 20 years. Instead, we've offered energy solutions for today and for the future.

We pressured the President to stop sending more oil to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which could save about 25 cents per gallon at the pump. We also passed legislation cracking down on price gouging. And now we're calling on President Bush to begin releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

After 7 years of the Bush-Cheney energy policy, written by and for an oil industry raking in record profits, a plan to transition America to a new and more affordable energy future is long overdue. The American people are suffering now and are looking for solutions today. Republicans say we need to open more land for drilling, but the

average American family will spend \$57,800 on gas before that drilling saves them a penny.

Mr. Speaker, House Republicans need to stop looking to the past for solutions to today's problems.

#### MIDDLE CLASS CONTINUES TO GET SQUEEZED AS ECONOMIC SITUATION GETS WORSE

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, for 7 years now, President Bush and Republicans have catered to the excesses of the wealthiest few while ignoring real needs of working Americans. Over the past 6 years, the median household income has fallen over \$1,000 per year while prices for health care, education, food, and gas have increased well above inflation. How can we expect working men and women to continue to meet the financial needs of their families when they bring home smaller paychecks as prices rise?

The Democratic Congress has been working hard to ensure that working Americans are not ignored. We passed an economic stimulus package that puts money into the wallets of working families. We've also passed legislation addressing the concerns of millions of Americans, including many of those from my home State of New Jersey, who are afraid of losing their jobs or are afraid they might lose their homes.

Senator MCCAIN's chief economic adviser claims that Americans are whining, that the economic downturn is all in their heads. House Democrats realize that we need to turn the Bush economy around.

□ 1030

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

#### NASA 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6455) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6455

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*